



California Regional Water Quality Control Board

Los Angeles Region



Winston H. Hickox
Secretary for
Environmental
Protection

320 W. 4th Street, Suite 200, Los Angeles, CA 90013
Phone (213) 576-6600 FAX (213) 576-6640

Gray Davis
Governor

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Dennis A. Dickerson
Executive Officer

DATE: March 9, 2001

SUBJECT: DRAFT BALLONA CREEK TRASH TMDL

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region, is pleased to provide the attached draft document for your review and comment.

The Regional Board staff invites you to submit written comments on this document. Written comments received by Regional Board staff **by April 16, 2001**, will be incorporated into the Boards Agenda Package for consideration at the Regional Board hearing on April 26, 2001.

The final TMDL and Basin Plan Amendments are scheduled to be heard during the Regional Board's April 26, 2001 meeting.

Background

Trash in rivers, streams and other waterways causes serious water quality problems. Small and large floatables can inhibit the growth of aquatic vegetation, decreasing spawning areas and habitats for fish and other living organisms. Wildlife living in rivers and in riparian areas can be harmed by ingesting or becoming entangled in floating trash. Settleables affect bottom feeders and contribute to sediment contamination. Some debris also convey nutrients, toxic substances, and other pollutants to the aquatic ecosystems. Floating debris that is not trapped and removed may eventually end up on the beaches or in coastal waters. As small pieces of plastic float at various depths in the ocean, organisms at all levels are affected.

The TMDL is a mechanism for restoring and maintaining water quality to meet the applicable water quality standards. The beneficial uses in Ballona Creek are impaired by large accumulations of floating debris (trash) throughout the entire river system. The narrative water quality objectives for floating materials and settleable solids, which apply to trash, are as follows:

“Waters shall not contain floating materials, including solids, liquids, foams, and scum, in concentrations that cause nuisance or adversely affect beneficial uses.”

California Environmental Protection Agency

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption
For a list of simple ways to reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see the tips at: <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/news/echallenge.html>



Our mission is to preserve and enhance the quality of California's water resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

“Waters shall not contain suspended or settleable material in concentrations that cause nuisance or adversely affect beneficial uses.”¹

In the Ballona Creek watersheds, the storm drains are a primary conveyor of trash to waterways. Trash reduction allocations will be incorporated into the stormwater permits, which will be modified to address monitoring and implementation of the trash TMDL. Load allocations for each city will be based on estimates of current trash discharges and correlated with different land uses, including residential, commercial and industrial. A trash generation factor will then be developed for each designated land use. The implementation plan will include a phased schedule to meet the ultimate goal of zero discharge within a 10-year period.

The proposed numeric target for trash in the river is zero, as even a single piece of trash can be detrimental, and no level of trash is acceptable in waters of the state. While it is feasible to implement significant reductions of trash in the river, it may not be possible to achieve the goal of zero. Therefore, the Board may consider reviewing the threshold of beneficial use impact during or after the seventh year of implementation of the TMDL. However, significant trash reductions must be achieved before the numeric target may be reconsidered.

Any questions concerning this draft TMDL, should be directed to Melinda Becker at (213) 576-6681 or Myriam Zech at (213) 576-6685.

Attachment: Draft of the Ballona Creek Trash TMDL
Notice of Filing
CEQA Checklist
Tentative Resolution 01-xx

¹ Water Quality Control Plan (“Basin Plan”), p. 3-9.

California Environmental Protection Agency

******The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption******
******For a list of simple ways to reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see the tips at: <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/news/echallenge.html>******



California Environmental Protection Agency

******The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption***
For a list of simple ways to reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see the tips at: <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/news/echallenge.html>***



Recycled Paper

Our mission is to preserve and enhance the quality of California's water resources for the benefit of present and future generations.